Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Records About Civil War Battle Sites, 1990 – 1993
Record Group 48

Updated May 13, 2020

1. What information is in these records?
The information relates to battlefields of the American Civil War, 1861-1865. The Events file contains information on 384 conflicts out of 10,500. Each record includes: state and county of the historic site, the type of battle or event, the theater of operations and the campaign to which the engagement relates, the dates of the battle or event, the current ownership of the site, and the assessment of three subject area experts of the military significance, physical integrity, historic preservation status, and interpretive potential of the site or event, and whether it should be a priority for protection of cultural property. The Counties file identifies the county location(s) of each battlefield and is linked to the Events file by a common battlefield reference number.

2. Why were these records created?
The Civil War Sites Advisory Commission created this database to support its congressional mandate to identify Civil War battlefields, determine their historic significance, assess short- and long-term threats to their integrity, and propose new ideas about their preservation and interpretation. The Commission intended the recommendations to be used as the basis for legislative proposals in the area of battlefield preservation.

3. Where these records part of a different Record Group?
Yes. NARA originally assigned these records to Record Group 220: Records of Temporary Committees, Commissions, and Boards. In 2016, as a result of a review of records allocated to Record Group 220, NARA determined some of the temporary committees and commissions were so closely aligned to the sponsoring agency that it was more appropriate for those records to be assigned to the sponsoring agency's record group. Consequently, NARA reallocated these records to Record Group 48: Records of the Office of the Secretary of the Interior.

Some of the documentation and other materials may still reference Record Group 220.

4. How can I access a copy of the full files?
The raw data file, along with the associated technical documentation, may be downloaded from the National Archives Catalog at: https://catalog.archives.gov/. There you can search by the series name, Records About Civil War Battle Sites, or using the National Archives Identifier 573343, which is the description identifier for this series.

In the results, select to view the full series description. Click on the link "file(s) described in the catalog" next to "Includes:" for a list of the file units within this series. Then select the file unit

containing the records of interest to you. The file unit description will include the list of electronic records and documentation files available for viewing and/or downloading.

Additional information about downloading electronic records from the Catalog is available at: https://www.archives.gov/research/electronic-records/access-in-catalog-faqs.

Please keep in mind that the data file consists of the raw structured data as loaded into AAD (i.e. the coded values without meanings), but without the AAD software that displays the meanings for coded values and field titles. For more details about using files containing raw structured data, you may wish to review our "Introduction to Raw Data" at: https://www.archives.gov/files/research/electronic-records/raw-data-intro.pdf.